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Interview with Peter N. Kyros, Sr. by Don Nicoll

Summary Sheet and Transcript

Interviewee

Kyros, Peter N., Sr.

Interviewer

Nicoll, Don

Date

December 6, 2000

Place

Washington, DC

ID Number

MOH 255

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Biographical Note

Peter N. Kyros, Sr. was born on July 11, 1925 in Portland, Maine. He attended the Portland public schools, graduating from Portland High School in 1943. He went to MIT and enrolled in their Navy V-12 program for engineer officer training. He was then accepted into the United States Naval Academy, graduating in 1947, and serving in the Navy until 1954. After discharge, Peter went on to Harvard Law School, graduating in 1957. He then returned to Portland to practice law. He served as counsel to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC). At around the same time, Peter became active in the Portland Democratic Committee. In 1964, he became chair of the Maine Democratic Party, and in 1966, he successfully ran for Congress. He served in Congress until January of 1975. His legislative accomplishments include the 200 mile fishing boundary. At the time of the interview, he was practicing law in Washington, D.C. He is the father of Peter N. Kyros, Jr., who worked for Senator Muskie (see interviews: MOH 107; MOH 109 and MOH 310).

Scope and Content Note

Interview includes discussions of: Navy V-12 and Naval Academy; the Great Depression; Navy service 1947-1954; counsel to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC); Dick McMahon; Tom Delahanty; Democratic gathering at the Calumet Club; personal involvement with the

Democratic Party; decision to run for Congress; Congressional campaign organization; campaigning with Ken Curtis; Elmer Violette; 1966 campaign; working with the Maine delegation in 1966; Bill Hathaway; failing to seat Adam Clayton Powell; fisheries management legislation; 200 mile fishing limit; fighting for BIW and Portsmouth; environmental legislation and Portland Harbor; Muskie's integrity; Muskie's ability to thoroughly examine a bill; Budget bill; Muskie's staff; campaigning for Muskie; and Muskie's legacy.

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Transcript

Don Nicoll: It is Wednesday, the 6th of December, the year 2000. We are in Washington, D.C. at the law offices of Peter N. Kyros at 2445 M Street NW. Good morning, Peter, would you state your full name and your place and date of birth, and spell your name for us please.

Peter Kyros: Good morning, Don, certainly. Peter N. Kyros, K-Y-R-O-S, born July 11, 1925, Portland, Maine at the Eye and Ear Lying In Hospital.

DN: Now known as Holt Hall.

PK: Now known as Holt Hall. Good for you, Don.

DN: And you grew up in Portland?

PK: Grew up in Portland, went to all Portland schools: Isabella Garvin Grade School, Jackson Grammar, Portland High. And then the war came and immediately, it was 1943, I went to MIT. MIT then was an accelerated program. I actually got a scholarship to Bowdoin, but I ended up at MIT because I wanted to go to the Naval Academy. My cousin, Dick Poulos, wanted to go to the Military Academy so I always loved the thought of going to the Naval Academy. And I got an alternate appointment from Congressman Robert Hale when I was a senior in high school, an alternate, I wasn't a principal. So I went to MIT, joined the Navy at MIT, a program called V12. V12 was a program that trained engineering officers, and I was there for about three and a half terms when I took the exam again for the U.S. Naval Academy, entrance exam. And this time I was the principal and I did go to the Naval Academy and graduated in 1947.

DN: Now, growing up in Portland, tell us about your family.

PK: Well, my dad had come over from the old country, from Greece, in 1898. And he had worked first in Lowell in the mills, and then they graduated in the early 1920s to Portland, Maine, and he had a small lunch. And he always made good money all through the years of the Depression, so I always had ample money. I was the best dressed boy in high school, and he just worked hard. And I had a very loving mother, I was very fortunate. Now that I've grown so much older, I never realized how fortunate I was, she was so caring of me. And I had one older brother who ended up in the post office after WWII, where he had served with Patton's forces in Europe. But my childhood was a happy one and I grew up in all the customs of Portland, Maine, which I love very much.

DN: Was your family at all involved in politics?

PK: No, they weren't at all. Papa was the kind of person that would always admire whoever was in office. If it was Franklin Delano Roosevelt, he admired him. If it was Eisenhower, he admired him, you know. He just admired anyone who was in (*unintelligible word*). So the family was not involved at all in politics.

DN: After you graduated from the Naval Academy in '47, did you continue in the Navy?

PK: I did, Don, I sailed around on a destroyer in the Mediterranean, I was in the Navy then. So I'd been in the Navy during WWII and I was in the Navy during Korea. And I had shore duty at Kittery, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, and I also had shore duty in Charleston, South Carolina, but mostly I was on ships until I left the Navy in 1954.

DN: Were you a deck officer or -?

PK: I was a supply officer on a destroyer and a destroyer tender. And I, so I sailed all over the place. I really enjoyed the Navy. At that time, the only, one of the major reasons I left was there was this huge hump, we used to call it, of commanders, lieutenant commanders, who had gotten their rank during war time, and they should have gotten their rank, they were pushed up very fast. So when I came along, and my cohorts, promotions were slower and things had slowed down in the Navy. And then, of course, my cousin Dick had gone to Harvard Law School and he'd see me regularly, and I was serving as a court martial officer in the Navy, and I got interested in the law. And he said, "You should pursue a law career."

DN: So you left the Navy and went to law school. Where did you go?

PK: I left the Navy and went to Harvard Law School. And that was a, kind of big surprise for me because I was a little older, no, I was somewhat older. And, but I enjoyed it and I worked very hard, I was married, I already had one child, and I went to, I spent three years at Harvard and graduated in 1957.

DN: And came back, did you come back to Portland?

PK: Came back to Portland and I, I had clerked for Judge John Clifford, first district federal court in Maine, and I really loved Judge Clifford. And I think I was going to become his law

clerk but the judge passed away, and as a result of that I became counsel to the Maine Public Utilities Commission working for someone named Chairman Tom Delahanty, a really dear man.

DN: And Tom was related to Judge Clifford.

PK: Tom was a son-in-law of Judge Clifford, and he was a good friend of Senator Ed Muskie's.

DN: And how did you come to go to the PUC?

PK: Well, I had, when I worked, I had clerked for a couple of summers as an associate clerk to Dick Poulos, my cousin, who was the law clerk for Judge Clifford. And through Judge Clifford and Dick Poulos I had met Tom Delahanty and other people. And I would be talking with them all the time, and there was an opening for counsel. Then you really never had regular counsel at the Maine Public Utilities Commission. They would hire outside counsel now and then for rate cases, but I began to work for them and immediately got involved in telephone and electric utility rate cases, really fascinating work.

DN: And who were the other commissioners at the time?

PK: I remember Fred, Fred, Fred -

DN: Fred Allen?

PK: Fred Allen, and Dick, and Dick -

DN: McMahon.

PK: Dick McMahon. God I loved those two people, I loved them all and they were so much fun. You know, we'd have these hearings, we'd go up to a place like Rockland, we'd get snowbound for three days on and a weekend, here, listening to water rates. But McMahon and Delahanty, I soon became very acquainted with the Democratic Party and with Ed Muskie and, and the chairman of the party at that time.

DN: Frank Coffin?

PK: Frank Coffin, who I really admired from the very moment I met him.

DN: Describe both Tom Delahanty and Dick McMahon.

PK: Dick McMahon was a big rotund fellow, full of fun and joy, and then could always look at the practical sides of everything. He never looked at any details or any depth of legal analysis, but he had a tremendous sound way, a real way, a Maine way we would say, of looking at things whether it was a utility rate or putting an easement through some property for a railroad.

Tom Delahanty was totally different, extremely judicious, deliberate. And he, ultimately he

became a superior court judge, I believe appointed by Senator, Governor Muskie. But Tom was a wonderful chairman. And so I enjoyed those two so much. And Fred, Fred Allen who subsequently became chairman of the Public Utilities Commission and I worked for him, was my neighbor in Portland. We would drive up together so, and he also was a very solid Republican. And we would, I learned early on to talk with both Republicans and Democrats and see how different people were, and actually they're all the same.

DN: When did you get involved in politics?

PK: We're at that time, Don. Even those years, in '57, '58, I began going to the local city Democratic meetings with John Flaherty and a couple other people that I knew. And that was my early involvement, I would keep on going. And then I got to meet Senator Muskie and certainly during the '60 campaign, it was a huge campaign, President Kennedy was running. I remember, I'll never forget the night they, that they brought Senator Kennedy up to the Calumet Club in, it was, I think it was about January of 1960. I believe it was, and he was there with us, Senator Muskie, and the former governor of Connecticut who was a senator, they brought him up there.

DN: John Bailey [Chair of Democratic National Committee at the time].

PK: No, a senator.

DN: A senator?

PK: Yes, you know him well, and it's God and doggone -

DN: Abe Ribicoff.

PK: Abe Ribicoff, and what a night that was. The old Calumet Club could only hold about six hundred, there were about eight hundred Democrats yelling and cheering I think, John Kennedy infused them like nothing else. But even before that, in 1958, I had worked on the Muskie campaign. Muskie was running for Senate in 1958 and I don't think we had a gubernatorial campaign that -

DN: It was the year Governor Clauson won.

PK: All right, that was the year I was writing speeches for Governor Clauson, whether you believe it or not. And so I had really begun to work for the Democratic Party, and I really enjoyed it and it was fascinating work, exciting, very nice people.

DN: And when did you decide to run for Congress?

PK: Well, I never really did decide. Nineteen sixty-six came and I got a call from someone named Don Nicoll saying to me, well prior to that, two years prior to that Don Nicoll called me and said, "Peter, we want you to become chairman of the party." So in '64 I'd become chairman of the [state] Democratic Party, after the huge Democratic victory in '64 by President Johnson

and what we had done. So then I worked at that for a couple years.

And then when '66 came I was, Don Nicoll, you called me and said, "Peter, we want you to run for Congress." And I was really taken by surprise, I had never planned anything like that. I was busy in law practice, beginning to make some money and some effect, and I kind of enjoyed law practice, especially trial work. And I just began to run, that's all, and I really didn't know very much about running except from what I'd seen from the outside. I had never run before for public office, I had never held public office before. And so it was a really remarkable experience for me, the spring of '66.

DN: Who were your campaign staff?

PK: Campaign staff, I had my son primarily, Peter, Jr., who promptly, at the very end of the campaign, borrowed seven thousand dollars from my father to run me on television, which was a telling blow because I had a primary. I had two good people, I had Eben Elwell. Eben Elwell had been the, a treasure of the State of Maine and he had done a great thing. Eben had looked out his old Yankee style and decided that the banks in which the state held its immediate cash deposits were not paying interest to the state. So Eben Elwell got a law passed and demanded they pay interest, which meant a few million dollars more of money for the state of Maine. I think this was a big thing, and it was a big telling blow for Eben.

There also was another person in the primary, his name was Tom Maynard. Tom I think was from Yale, but whatever, he was a very thoughtful man. And the war was going on, the Vietnam War, and Tom was highly in opposition to the war already. The war had just really begun sort of and America was getting involved. But Tom Maynard was sort of a anti war candidate. And so those were, that was the primary, and I was fortunate to be the winner in the primary.

Then I had for an opponent in my first race Peter Garland. Peter had served, Peter was from Saco, a nice family, Garland family. He had served in the, he had served in the congress and I think, with redistricting and everything, we had gone down to two seats then, he no longer was there. Now I had enormous help in the campaign from Senator Muskie, and advice, counsel, and his staff. When they were acting as non-staff they came up and took time off, they were tremendously helpful. I was also helped in the campaign by a Republican congressman from Boothbay Harbor, Stan Tupper. Stan had been kind of a middle-of-the-roader and was well liked by the administration. As a matter of fact, he was then appointed with the rank of ambassador to the exposition in Canada, some kind of a national exposition. And he was very helpful, and he only asked one thing of me. He said he had a couple of wonderful Maine staff people and he asked me if I would keep them, which I certainly did when I did finally win the election.

DN: You had, as I recall, three staffers, Peter, Jr., -

PK: Peter, Jr., John, John's an ambassador now to -

DN: John O'Leary.

PK: John O'Leary, and John Flan -

DN: David Flanagan.

PK: David Flanagan. Absolutely crackerjack people, wonderful people. Peter really ran the campaign for me initially.

DN: And they were all of what, sixteen?

PK: I think they were all sixteen or seventeen, Peter and his friends were sixteen or seventeen years old. Absolutely, just as young as could be. And they'd put out press releases and they, and the Muskie people were tremendous in scheduling me everywhere.

One of the nice things about that campaign that year, Ken Curtis was running for governor. He's just the most amiable, likeable man I've ever known, and it was nice to go around with Ken. Ken was already a much more seasoned campaigner than I was of course, Ken had run before. And it was good to follow him around and learn how to behave, not to give lectures as if you were some kind of a Harvard graduate but act like a human being and talk to people, and listen and learn something.

DN: And the candidate for U.S. Senate that year on the Democratic ticket was Elmer Violette.

PK: Was Elmer Violette, what a sweetheart, that was a gentle man and a good man. And I remember, he, everywhere I went in that first district Elmer was always there trying very hard, and he ran a very good race, I was very proud of him. Very gentle, offered himself up, and it was a hard race naturally against Senator Margaret Chase Smith. It was a very difficult race, a very uphill race.

DN: Were there any major issues in that campaign, in your house campaign?

PK: In '66, Don, I think the major thing was jobs for Maine. Ed Muskie had begun talking about a good environment and clean air, and that was just breaking through. Jobs was a central issue, keeping the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, educating the children, a strong America. The war was just breaking in slightly. The war, I don't think in the first campaign the Vietnamese war, in '66, was a major issue yet. It was going to become a major issue very, very soon. At that point it was still just in discussion and people were getting to feel and sense it. Although, as I say, Tom Maynard in the primary was really running as an anti-war candidate.

DN: And in September, or actually, no, in November of that year you were successful and came to the Congress.

PK: Yes, I came to Congress and the very first thing I did was to ask Senator Muskie, because he was always, always my mentor. I looked to him for guidance, and his staff, including you, Don. And I asked him, I said, "What committees, you know, would best serve what we do in Maine?" And immediately he told me the Energy and Commerce Committee, and probably Fish and Wildlife. And sure enough, I met with Speaker McCormack and they were very good to me, and so I got on Banking for, Banking Committee for several months. But you know within the

first several months they switched me over to Energy and Commerce. So it was a good committee for our state, had all kinds of things about transportation, electricity, medical things, the NIH, everything that was good for Maine.

And I couldn't get on Fish and Wildlife because Bill Hathaway, the other congressman and a good friend, was on Fish and Wildlife, but then subsequently in a few years Bill left that committee and I went to Fish and Wildlife and worked on the Merchant Marine. And one of my big bills, which we can talk about a little later in relation to Senator Muskie, the two hundred mile fishing limit.

DN: And in those early days, as you served your district and also served in the Maine delegation, what was work like with your colleagues?

PK: Well of course I worked enormously closely with Senator Muskie's office (*unintelligible phrase*), and those were the years when, first when Lyndon Johnson was president. And Senator Muskie would always make sure that, in a nice way, that I would get credit for all kinds of things that happened in the first district, although he really had the first opportunity to put out the statements about it, but they would always help me.

Also, we had reg-, I had regular meetings with Senator Muskie and his staff. I was in regular meetings with you, Don, all the time and worked very closely with you. And so that was helpful. I also liked Bill Hathaway a lot. I trusted Bill and we, I would ask him constantly what's best for us in the state of Maine. And I don't think there was hardly ever a time, maybe rarely, that we voted differently, and so we were very close together. And Bill had been there two years before me. Bill was on a Education, now it's called Education in the Workplace, in the Workforce, but he was in the Education subcommittee and he thought very hard about it.

Interestingly, the very first day I got to the floor of the House, the very first vote we had after getting sworn in was a vote to, a fail to seat Adam Clayton Powell. Now Bill Hathaway was on a committee with Adam Clayton Powell, knew him as chairman. So prior to getting to Congress were all these florid gory details about Adam, Congressman Adam Clayton Powell from New York violating all kinds of rules about spending money. And yet Bill said to me, very calmly, "Peter," he says, "he, as a chairman for Education and Labor he is a superb chairman, this is regrettable," and indeed we voted to not seat Congressman Powell. And then subsequently, Don, about several months later the Supreme Court said, 'You can't just have a simple majority vote not to seat, you got to seat a person because age, residence and citizenship are the only qualifications and then you must ex-, if you're going to do something from this conduct, you must expel them by a two-thirds vote.'

So subsequently Adam Clayton Powell came to the floor of the House, son-of-a-gun. There was some, I was up in Augusta, I met some, some Maine citizen, retired Army, was doing something in schools. Something was wrong that he had, he happened to be a black gentleman and he told me something. So, some problem involving, involving Adam Clayton Powell's committee. And Adam Clayton Powell had come back and I saw him, I spoke to Adam Clayton Powell. Adam Clayton Powell immediately helped me to help this man. And I, I respected him for that. But I'll never forget that circumstance.

So I relied very strongly on Senator Muskie's office and Bill Hathaway for guidance and assistance, because I really didn't know my way around the House. I had not been in public office before, and having been in politics as I was, as I had stated to you, I found that was quite peripheral and was not really deeply involved. I was, never had been deeply involved as I was when I became a congressman.

DN: You spoke about the two hundred mile limit bill, and working with Senator Muskie on that.

PK: The two hundred mile fishing limit. I became enamored the minute I got there because I had talked with the Sea and Shore Fisheries in Maine and they told me about compacts and their agreements. And we were watching this huge Soviet fleet right off our coast pulse fishing, P-U-L-S-E. Pulse fishing means you keep your ships there for a long time, scoop up everything in the bottom, far beyond any chance of regeneration of the fish. So that was infuriating, and we did nothing about it.

And so I had a bill, and Gerry Studds from Massachusetts had a bill, and Senator Magnuson had a bill in. Now, this is almost a paradigm as to how Ed Muskie approaches things. He wasn't for the two hundred mile fishing limit initially. He never rushed into things, he was always, and I'm very proud of him, he was always extremely deliberative, reflective. And there were no quick, glib solutions to problems like putting in a two hundred mile fishing limit border into which other fishing fleets from foreign nations couldn't come. Because many people raised questions, the State Department, about narrow straits where our ships had to go through, and what if other countries did this. And so he looked at it from the many angles, and it's just so typical of him, and so correct, too.

In any event, I want you to know that I, one of the big things I did was I held hearings. And I had this book of hearings, ten hearings, all the way from Portland, Maine, all the way around to, practically to Seattle. And so many diverse views, particularly about anadromous fish like the tuna that goes in and out of the limits, and so on and so on. But in any event, the bloody two hundred mile limit bill passes just as I leave the Congress, so I'm just delighted. And it's still in effect, and I think it was a good way to manage the fisheries. And the next problem was to manage the fishermen. But I remember Ed approached it, he supported what I was trying to do, and he always pushed me. And, but he gave advice, but he himself approached this in a very calm way like he approached everything else, and I, which I think, on reflection, was always the correct way.

DN: Now you served in the Congress for how long?

PK: Eight years, Don, from '66 to '7-, '67 to '75.

DN: It took a long time to get the two hundred mile limit through.

PK: Yes, it did, it was a hard time, there was a lot of opposition. The State Department, the Defense Department opposed it, tuna people, feed people, all kinds of other people opposed it.

And yet we worked it out so it finally, and it required, it required a lot of deliberation and a lot of ventilation of all the facts which made it work.

DN: In the years between 1967 and 1975, were there other major legislation or other major projects affecting Maine in which you were involved with Senator Muskie?

PK: Yes. Of course, I was always fighting to keep the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard open. There were, there's always kinds of (*unintelligible word*), a couple of Navy admirals, good people, who had gone up there and said, "The yard's ineffective, ineffectual, and the labor force does, is not productive." So that really worried us, so I think I'd be up there once a month, you know, with my Navy background, fighting for the shipyard. And Ed Muskie was in there all the time fighting for the shipyard, no matter who was present or, he always, always supported the yard. So I worked on that almost constantly, a constant concern. And I also worked with a New Hampshire delegation, some Republicans, Louis Wyman was helpful when Mr. Nixon was president, and Bill Hathaway would also help. But the shipyard, and this employment was a major concern.

Another major concern was Bath Iron Works. In those years, a huge contract was going to be let for what's called a DXDX, what you know now as the Aegis class cruisers, but they were the high speed destroyers, the Burke class of destroyers as a matter of fact, before we got to the Aegis class. And the contract was going to go down at Lytton and Pascagula, and we were really, had hearings and we fought to make sure that Bath got part of the contract. As it ended out, Bath got some parts of these contracts and things worked out pretty well. But on that I took the lead together, and also from Senator Muskie, because he was very effective in that, and I used to work with him on that. We worked on fishing problems.

We worked on general problems on, those were the years of the great society and I'm delighted that the cities were built up. We had Model Cities, and those were all good ideas because not only Portland, Boston, all those cities have been transformed, but I think we laid, people like Ed Muskie was a leader in this, laid great roots in changing American society. And the other thing is, my own Portland harbor in those years just had a huge wooden pipe that just dumped all the bloody sewage right in the middle of the harbor. It was Muskie, and I'll never forget this, all those years I was there, was fighting for clean water, fought and fought and fought, ahead of jobs or anything else, and he was so correct. Because with clean water Portland harbor and Boston harbor, other harbors along the coast, have become sparkling and centers of growth they never would have begun. And this framework was all laid down, I know it was laid down by Senator Muskie.

But, Don, I also had good relations the first four years I was there with Senator Smith. I only would meet her at delegation meetings, and I just, you know, Senator Smith was different and she was sort of imperial and a highly thought of person. And I guess I was kind of, I didn't have the warm and close relationship that I had with Ed Muskie, the easy relationship, but with her I just had kind of a fun relationship. But I had a lot of respect for her and I would see her and talk to her and people. And I was just kind of guarded around her, frankly, although she, she was very friendly toward me at all times.

DN: What is your recollection of the way the House worked when you were a member?

PK: Vastly different, vastly different than now. In those days, Speaker John [W.] McCormack, Wilbur Mills, George [H.] Mahon, appropriations, they ran the House. You, it's unthinkable that they would do what they do now. They go to a school and get trained and come in, start to pass bills and talk out from the back benches as if they owned the place already. That's not a bad thing that I see coming up, but some of it's excessive. In those days leadership, really, you had to look toward leadership. And the committee chairmen were ten more powerful than they are. Power was not diluted. There were no terms limits as the Republicans have put in to term limit their chairman.

And you know, Don, we didn't have a budget bill initially when I was there, so people like George Mahon, the chairman of appropriations from Texas, that elegant, thoughtful gentleman, would figure out how much money you spent and then not go any further. But, you know, we didn't, also didn't have these enormous budget deficits in those years, we simply didn't. The war caused a little bit of it, that's the Vietnam War, but we simply didn't have those kind of deficits. But it was a different Congress, it was more structured. You could not speak up without getting into a lot of trouble, and that meant you had to work your way through the seniority system. If you wanted to pass a bill like two hundred mile fishing limits, you had to talk to a lot of people, convince them. So it was a lot different than just getting your own coalition and just jumping forward.

Nowadays, and there's nothing wrong with what they're doing nowadays, it is totally different. Chairmanships are jumping around. People speak up all the time. They raise their own money totally independently of any party, you know, that's with their PAC groups. The consequence of that is, you have all these, all these independent members in the House and the Senate totally independent of the party, maybe relying on the party for soft money or something else during the campaigns. So they're not beholden to anybody but themselves. I think the only time I've ever seen the kind of parties we used to have back in the sixties was when Speaker Newt Gingrich kind of nationalized the Republicans in '94, '96 behind that Contract for America and they kind of got together, and they had problems.

But it was a different House and you, whether you dealt in committee or you dealt on the floor, you had much more respect for seniority and you could not go off on your own as quickly. You could not file as many bills as they have nowadays, or go on a, off on so many different initiatives without consulting more carefully. Was it a better House? I can't answer that. I mean, times change, America changes, information dissemination has changed.

So the people I see on the Hill today are the same kind of excellent people, men and women all striving very hard. I'm unhappy to see carried on the floor, particularly in the House, a lot of glibness instead of reflection and thoughtfulness. Or the debate is much more serious because they, they kind of seek political advantage because they have such widespread coverage. But on the other hand, all in all, it was a different kind of style in those days when I was there. You were not supposed to speak up and put a bill in the very first day you got there, that's all it is. I noticed the other day Mrs. Clinton, and God bless her, before she even got to the Senate she announced that she was going to put in an amendment to get rid of the Electoral College. That's

not something that you did in those days without having a lot of people fall all over you, even if it ma-, was the right thing to do.

DN: As you look back at Senator Muskie and his accomplishments, what were the qualities that he had and how did he display them that made him effective as a legislator?

PK: Well, I think I really am fit to answer this question because I can see the reflection of myself, impatient, the willing to run ahead, not (*unintelligible word*) on reflection, deliberation. When I think of Ed, first I think the integrity of his position. He used to look at things, honestly, and this is a, this is not even said in lightness, it's seriousness, he really tried to do the best thing. It was not the political thing. Because sometimes things almost look equal and we veer over to what might favor us politically, but that wasn't his, his, his bent at all. Ed would really try to look for what was the best thing. His efforts on behalf of clean air, clean water, the environment, those weren't big payoff things immediately for the state of Maine. We needed jobs, jobs at all costs, early on when he was a legislator. But right from the very beginning I could see that he had this attitude that you must maintain the integrity of what you're trying to do. And of course he had integrity throughout all his dealings.

Secondly, he was enormously reflective, he would look at a bill from all sides. And it wasn't, it wasn't a matter of just accepting something, there were sides that he'd look at that were very difficult, that you couldn't see at the first instance.

Third, he had a depth of understanding, this tremendous work that he did about the relationship of the federal government to the states, state-federal relationships, and how to, how are you doing mandates, what should the states do, what should the federal government. This is a never ending problem and he studied that beautifully.

Fourth, he was a man of, you know, we think of Democrats as spenders, they've always styled Democrats as spenders. And here was a man, when first chosen as the first chairman of the budget committee I remember when the Budget Bill was passed around '74, I think it was Brock Adams on the House side, but it was Ed Muskie that was chairman on the Senate side, and he made the bill work. I mean these bills don't come full blown from the head of Zeus and begin working. So he gathered an excellent staff and he made the bill work, and the Budget Bill today has been a help to the Congress, it's been a guide. Because up to then, Don, they never paid attention to any end figure of spending. And now the budget figure has come (*unintelligible word*).

Six, Muskie had a good sense of people. Muskie was not the closest, warmest man in the world, but he was close and true to choosing people around him, even as you Don, I'm very proud of you, and my son Peter, Jr.. He chose people around him that were thorough and good and helped. And he could be grumpy at times and short, but he worked hard, he was a hard working man. And so he was a good student of staff and he availed himself of superb staff. And he would have around him, even early on, people like Dick Dubord. My heart breaks every time I think of him, who not only had tremendous common sense about the state of Maine and its people, but would have a whole pack of jokes and sayings and witticisms that would keep us going.

Above all, Muskie was persevering, steadfast, courageous, and he never quailed. I mean, no matter what came up he could stand there and fight out. And he could be very tough also. But in debate you got the feeling that he understood what he was talking about, and he had a great sense of America. His father had come over here as an immigrant and he never forgot that what we were trying to do was, when we say we're doing the people's business as our little slogan, as a making just a joke, he never forgot that he was doing the people's business. And I think all these virtues I say about him are not found in too many people all at one time. And you could see that I'm correct in saying this, because the people that worked and were close to him always got tremendous affection and respect for him.

DN: Did you and he ever talk about your fathers' common experience as immigrants?

PK: There was one sweet thing about my father. I was in Westbrook Plaza one day, we were campaigning, early on. I was just beginning to run and Muskie was there and my father was there. And Papa came up and gave Muskie a hug, and Muskie didn't know my father at the time. He just looked at him in his kind, gentle way and shook his hand, and afterwards we talked about it, and Muskie just mused happily about things like that. But he, Ed Muskie had an understanding of how people belonged to this country, and he had a gentleness toward Maine people, and understanding them from the very beginning when I met him. And I, it was a quality that was very admirable about him, and I think that's one of the reasons that people in Maine still think of him so highly.

DN: Tell us about your career after you left the House.

PK: After I left the House I began to work with some fishing accounts and some health accounts. But then, Don, I began to be, I met a man named Lou Frey. Lou Frey had served with me in the Congress, he's a Republican from Orlando. He had joined a large law firm called Finley, Cumbel, Hiney, Whiney, huge firm. So he said, "Peter, they've got a legislative section there and you'd fit in there." And I was there with former Senator Russell Long, former Senator Tydings, former Governor Hugh Carey. It's a superb firm and I would go up to the Hill all the time and do legislative work.

I kind of liked it. I'd go to Ed's office, Ed Muskie's office and later on George Mitchell's office, and I'd go, [John] "Jock" McKernan was in Congress then, I'd go to Bill Cohen's office. I'd see various people. But mostly it was, not the Maine offices I'd go into, offices from the state of Maine, but I did general legislative work of all kinds and I really began to enjoy it, and it was thorough and good. So that firm went on for quite a while. And I, in fact I was still in that firm when Ed Muskie had ended being secretary of state and had gone himself downtown to a law firm and was working for a law firm.

So from there I, that law firm collapsed from making, expanding too much and people demanding too much money. And I've ended up by myself sort of, Kyros & Cummings Associates. And what I do mostly, Don, I like to call it God's work, because I worked on the National Institutes of Health when I was in Congress, on the Energy and Commerce Public Health subcommittee with a congressman named Paul Rodgers. I worked for a lot of scientists,

around twenty-six thousand of them, some of them from Maine, from up in Bangor area, and I work on getting money for the NIH. I also represent administrative law judges, federal administrative law judges throughout the United States. And so I have these two or three small accounts and it's pretty, I kind of find it fascinating because, first, you really look at the Congress differently now from the outside. You can see the people that are just posing, and the people that are really true and sincere, the people that are worried only about getting reelected and those that really perform.

And, you know, I can look back at Ed Muskie and the kind of work that he and his staff did and, I mean, he stands out even more as a tremendous leader. You really appreciate even more than ever before what goes on up there. And you know it also says to yourself, if I had another chance at it, which I certainly don't want, you know, I could do even more. But I, I now have good relations with the people that are there, with John Baldacci, who I consider a tremendous leader. Tom Allen I know a little less well than John Baldacci. And, of course, I know Senator [Olympia] Snowe, think the world of her, and Senator [Susan] Collins I think the world of. I think they're a very good delegation, very representative of our state of Maine. But I miss Ed and his office and the power and majesty that Ed exp-, Ed, when he would take the floor. Ed Muskie, it was, you know, it was a pleasure to listen to him. It wasn't just a usual political side of an issue, he would examine things. So when he spoke it was worthwhile listening or reading, because you would learn something every time.

DN: Were you involved in his vice presidential campaign, or his presidential campaign?

PK: Yes I was, the one we had, when we, first his vice presidential campaign we were starting it. It was in 1968 and (*unintelligible phrase*) we were at that convention and all the things that we did, and so I tried to be helpful then in the campaign. But much more so in '72. I went to various states, including New Hampshire, and campaigned for Ed until we finally got halted in our events. But I remember that campaign, I worked very hard for him and so did my staff. And we worked thorough-, we stayed up weeks in New Hampshire campaigning for Ed, got to know New Hampshire pretty well.

DN: Are there any other observations you have on Ed or -?

PK: Well the last time I really spent time with Ed was just about a year before his passing, and it was with Dick Couris (*sounds like*), a good friend of his, and the other gentleman was one who used to work in a drug firm, ended up representing Pennsylvania. Anyway, so we were sitting there, and we were at the, I think we were at the -

DN: Oh, is this Larry Murthen (*sounds like*)?

PK: Not Larry Murthen, no, I just know him so well, I can see his name. Anyway, we were there busy telling Ed, "Ed you got to write your memoirs. You got to put all this stuff down on paper." Ed was so philosophical in that gentle, whimsical way that he had, and that slow smile that would capture his features and so entrance you when you talked to him. I'll never forget that, we had a wonderful luncheon. And he, we went over all kinds of things and he laughed at so many things that had gone on over past times. So it was a couple hours of reminiscing, and

that was really the last time that I had spent time with Ed before his passing. And I miss him, and I still have his photograph of him in my office, and I'll never forget his funeral which I thought was beautiful. I remember meeting President Carter there who was so pleased with Ed, and I've seen him subsequently.

But any event, Ed Muskie represented to me the whole of politics and the whole of government as I knew it. And I never would have become involved at all except for him, and trying to live up to his traditions of reflection, deliberateness, integrity. It's a really hard task and I think we ought to pass that on to a lot of, many people, because his was the most successful political career that I know of in Maine as of yet.

DN: Thank you very much, Peter.

PK: Thank you.

End of Interview